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EXECUTED.

Three Western Men Suffer Death.

Henry Stair, Charles Wilson and Noah Merriman Hanged.

The Law's Penalty Paid in Nevada, St. Louis and Belleville.

Only One Neck of the Three Broken by the Fall.

Nevada, Mo., Jan. 15.—Henry Stair paid the penalty of his crime, the murder of the Sewells, by hanging in this city to-day. Last night was spent in a restless mood, sleep not coming to the condemned man until 5 o'clock in the morning. He then slept soundly until 8 o'clock when he arose and partook sparingly of breakfast.

Although the day dawned gloomily, only 8,000 people had assembled, to witness the execution.

Ministers of the different churches went the morning in the condemned man's cell.

At 12:15 o'clock the procession started from the jail, arriving at the scaffold at 12:40.

NOT A SIGN OF FEAR.

Stair mounted the scaffold with a firm tread. The Rev. Dr. Messer then read a passage of scripture and delivered a short prayer. Stair then stepped forward and began a speech which lasted for forty minutes, in which he accused Sheriff Hill and Prosecuting Attorney Blanton of improper intimacy with Nannette Osborne, and also complained severely of his prison treatment.

Stair stood upon the scaffold perfectly composed, holding in his hands a roll of manuscript to which he made frequent references during his speech. Deliberately and in a calm voice he began by asserting that before God, neither he nor Nannette Osborne were guilty of the murder of the Sewells, but both were victims of circumstances: that Prosecuting Attorney Blanton and Sheriff Hill did all in their power to convict persons whom they knew to be innocent.

INDULGING IN A TIRADE.

This assertion was followed by a tirade against both Blanton and Hill and was closed by an appeal to the people to be careful in the future to elect officers who would fill their places with honest integrity.

Stair then asked it one of the jurymen, who had brought in the verdict of murder against him, named Eaton was present, and a voice in the audience answering in the affirmative, he said: "Mr. Eaton, did you not say before my trial that you desired to be on the jury so you could hang me?" Eaton answered emphatically, "No!" and Stair said: "I heard you did; and, if so, it was very wrong." He then asked for another juror and was not answered.

APPEALING FOR NANNETTE OSBORNE.

Stair then gave a detailed account of his finding of the bodies and burying them, just as he did at his trial, and time and again asserted his innocence and the innocence of his wife.

The speech was wound up by an appeal to the people to clear Nannette Osborne as they loved justice. He said that he was ready and willing to die, and wished his old father would not mourn for him, as he felt no fears for himself. He then requested that a prayer be offered and a hymn sung. The Rev. W. T. McClure offered a prayer and started the hymn "Jesus, Lover of my Soul."

and stair ignited in singing in a clear tone without a tremor.

SINGING AT THE LAST.

As the deputy sheriff was about to adjust the black cap Stair asked and was granted permission to make further remarks and spoke a few minutes, making another appeal for Nannette Osborne and closing with the words "God bless you all." As the black cap was being adjusted he began singing "I am going to join the angels" and was singing when the cap was placed over his face.

THE NECK WAS BROKEN.

With a deep sigh the condemned man braced himself on the trap, and at 1:28 Sheriff Hill sprang the trap and Stair was hurled into eternity. His neck was broken by the fall and life was pronounced extinct in eight minutes.

Stair was born in Wayne county, Ohio, and was 35 years old. His father bid him good bye at 10:30 o'clock this morning. His last words were: "Tell the whole truth, Stewart, and nothing but the truth." His father left with the body at 6:30 this evening for his home at Plymouth, Ind.

ON THE WAY TO THE GALLOWES.

At 12:40 Stair accompanied by Sheriff Hill and his deputies arrived at the scaffold. Just previous to his arrival a wagon drove inside the ropes with his coffin. The death warrant had been read to the doomed man in the jail just before he started to the gallows, and he had his final interview with Nannette Osborne, which was very affecting. He was conveyed to the scaffold in a closed bus duly guarded by a corps of deputy sheriffs on horseback. Judge Burton and Prosecuting Attorney Blanton were with him in the bus and on the scaffold. He ascended the latter with a firm and easy step, and was then pinioned by the sheriff. A prayer was then offered, during which Stair maintained a dignified composure, throwing an occasional glance upward toward the rope.

FOR A CRUEL CRIME.

On the night of August 5, 1885, a most cold-blooded double murder was perpetrated near here. Jacob Sewell, aged 55 years, and his son Mack Sewell, aged 17 years, who at the time were camping near the fair grounds, in the western part of the city, were the victims. Suspicion soon fell on H. S. Stair and his wife, or paramour Nannette Osborne, who were frequent visitors at the Sewell camp. While in this city old man Sewell was taken sick and the Stairs had often sat up with him, giving him medicine, and in this way had gained his confidence. The murder was deliberately planned. Previous to the killing and on Wednesday night, August 5, Stair was seen to depart from home and wend his way toward the camp. Arriving there he waited until the boy had fallen asleep, when he stole up to him and struck him a terrible blow with a hatchet, completely crushing his skull.

The groans aroused the father, who, although in a very weak condition, attempted to crawl from the wagon near by in which he was lying, but he was dealt a terrible blow with the already bloody hatchet. Stair then returned to where the senseless boy lay and cut his throat from ear to ear, and going back to the wagon the murderer made sure that the old man was dead. He then came to town and made hasty preparations to leave.

WHERE THE MURDERERS WENT.

Stair and his wife then proceeded to the camp, where they secured their plunder, two teams, two wagons and about \$16 in money and a few camp utensils. The bodies, having previously been loaded in one of the wagons by Stair, they were ready to start. They proceeded north on the Canton road, but before reaching it found they turned into a wood-

road that led into the Marmaton river bottom, halting about a mile from the main road. No doubt their intentions were to sink the dead bodies in the Marmaton river, as they made inquiry as to the depth of the river at that point. But their plans were frustrated by finding that they had camped near two prospectors, Jacob Phillips and J. W. Cox, who were digging for a treasure which had been buried there during the war.

That evening, while Stair was away from camp, the woman noticed old man Sewell's dog licking blood from the bottom of one of the wagon beds. She screamed and Stair heard her and came back. About the time he arrived one of the prospectors put in an appearance to find the cause of the screaming. Stair told him that his wife had been scared that morning by a big black dog and was still nervous. He also told him that he had some fresh beef in the wagon which had spoiled and smelled bad.

THE TWO BODIES FOUND.

This aroused the suspicion of the man and he told a young man by the name of Thomas Hendricks about it. They agreed to meet near there that night and watch the Stairs. Arriving there that night they found everything still and went home with the agreement to meet there the next morning. That night the Stairs moved their camp down the river about a quarter of a mile. When the men met at their first camping ground the next morning they found the Stairs had gone. Following the wagon track down the river until they came to where they had stopped the second time they found a bloody hatchet with gray hairs matted in the blood and a bloody pair of shoes. A further examination revealed a track in the leaves where some heavy object had been dragged. Following this about fifty feet they came to a mound several feet high, by the side of which was a large pile of leaves. Raking them away the head of a man appeared, which afterward proved to be that of Mack Sewell.

Thomas Hendricks was sent to town to give the alarm and the coroner was at once notified, and gathering a jury started for the ghastly spot. In clearing away the leaves a second body was discovered, that of old Jacob Sewell. Both bodies were so mutilated that they were hardly recognizable, but were identified by James Jones of this city.

FOLLOWING THE FUGITIVES.

In the meantime Sheriff Hill, Marshal Brady, Deputy Sheriff White, ex-Sheriff Fisher and a large posse of deputized citizens started in every direction after the murderers.

Early that same morning, while day was still distant, Stair deposited the dead bodies of his friends in life and started to make his escape, traversing the same road back by which he had entered the bottom until about one and a half miles from Nevada he took an easterly course, which he traveled for several miles. He then turned in a northeastern direction, traveling thus until about thirteen miles from Nevada, where he turned from the main road into the dense underbrush, going about 150 yards into a small clearing where they camped and where they were captured about 2 o'clock that day by Marshal Brady and Deputy Sheriff White of Nevada, and Charles Miller, marshal of Seneca City.

STAIR AND WIFE ARRESTED.

The woman was washing when the officers arrived and did not notice them until they were close to her. Stair was not visible and when they asked her where he was she screamed out, "O, men, what have we done, what have we done?" In a few moments Stair returned and was promptly arrested and taken with the wagons to Harwood Station, where the wagons were left to be driven through and the officers and

their prisoners took the train for Nevada, arriving in this city about 5 o'clock that evening.

Stair was searched when arrested and on his person was found a pocket book containing \$16—one \$10-bill, one \$5-bill and \$1 in silver. It was proven that old man Sewell had that amount in the denominations described a day or so before the killing. A receipt was also found in the pocket book for ringbone spavin, on the bottom of which was written: "Do you think it safe to try to kill them? Wrap them up in cloths and say they went off in the buggy."

Stair, when arrested stepped up to his paramour and said, "Nannette, keep your mouth shut."

CHARLES WILSON HANGED.

St. Louis, Jan. 15.—Charles Wilson, colored, who killed a river steamer mate for refusing to pay him his wages, was hanged this morning for the crime at 7:45. He was calm and brave and emphatically protested his innocence of murder, claiming that the deed was committed in self defense.

The body hung motionless for a time, but soon the limbs began to jerk and contortions of a most horrible character followed. During the struggle for life by the swinging man his hands became loose, and after several attempts succeeded in grasping the rope above his head with a death grip. They were, however, soon disengaged, by the attending physicians, who held them by the side of the struggling form until death ensued.

Many murders were more cold blooded and more brutal than that of William A. David have been expiated by short terms in the penitentiary, and despite the decision of the criminal court, it will always be a question whether Wilson's crime was murder in the first or second degree. The victim, David, was second mate of the steamer Fannie Tatum, and Wilson was a roustabout on the boat, which had been plying in the Paducah trade, although her last trip before the murder was to Cairo and return. On the trip up the river, near Chester, Ill., and about eighty miles below the city: Wilson had a dispute with David, the latter accusing him of shirking his work. The dispute was terminated by the mate knocking Wilson down with a heavy stick, the blow cutting him over the right eye leaving a scar. The negro then demanded his pay for two days, amounting to \$2, and the mate refused to pay him, whereupon Wilson left the boat at Chester and came up to the city on the Emma C. Elliot. The Tatum landed at the foot of Cherry Monday morning, July 31, and about 4:30 o'clock that afternoon Wilson went down to the boat and again demanded his money. David cursed him and drove him ashore. Charles was first mate of the boat, but being a rather old man David took charge of the men and ruled them with a rod of iron. On the afternoon in question he was half drunk and very abusive. When Wilson was driven from the boat he walked up the levee toward Cherry, and on the way picked up a rock, but did not use it as the mate was following him closely. One of the witnesses testified that he had heard Wilson say: "I will get even with you if it costs my life." Half an hour later Wilson returned to where the roustabouts were handling freight and it was observed that he had a rock in each hand, and David, who was in company with Capt. William Bruner, a levee clerk, asked what he had in his hand, and as he asked the question, Wilson threw one of the rocks which struck David in the side causing him to stagger and fall, and as he did so Wilson threw the second which struck David in the back of the head, fracturing the skull

and causing concussion of the brain. David was picked up, unconscious, and conveyed to the boat, from whence he was carried to the city hospital, where he died at 10 o'clock that night. Wilson ran away after throwing the rocks and was pointed out to Officer Taylor by the crowd. He was placed under arrest and taken to the Third district police station.

The murdered mate was 27 years old, and resided in Cincinnati. A few months before his death he married a girl named Annie Dwyer, of Memphis, and shortly afterwards secured a divorce from her. His mother was quite wealthy and resided at Rising Sun Ind. He was a nephew of Captain David of the United States packet of Cincinnati, and had been mate of the Tiger and Calhoun. He joined the Tatum six weeks before his death, and, as he would as soon fight as eat, he used to take upon himself the settlement of all quarrels. One of the deck hands told him that some of the negroes would kill him, and that he had better keep his eyes open. David looked at him with a gloomy smile and replied: "I expect to get killed on the deck of a steamboat."

A WIFE MURDER'S END.

Belleville, Ill., Jan. 15.—Noah Merriman, the negro who brutally killed his wife April 10, 1885, was hanged at 11:30 this morning. He confessed the murder of his wife and stated that he had killed another woman in East St. Louis six years ago.

Shortly after noon on April 10, Merriman went to his house on Jackson street and not finding his wife at home went shortly after to the house of Ann Jackson on High street in search of her, finding her there. He accused her of inconstancy and with cohabiting with various men and threatened to kill her. She becoming frightened ran out the back door, Noah after her. His wife ran around the house to the front gate and just as she was opening it Noah picked up a brick and hit her in the back of the head, rendering temporarily unconscious. While she lay on the ground he took his revolver from his hip pocket and shot her in the back near the ninth rib, the ball passing so close to her heart that she died in a few moments. He then stood and looked at her for a moment, then made a motion to strike her, but finally finished his cowardly work by administering to the dead woman several kicks. He then coolly walked off down the street, left Belleville in a southwesterly direction, and wandered around in the woods for several days, begging his meals at adjacent farms. He finally made his way to Nashville, Ill., about twenty-six miles from the city, stayed there a few days and then wandered back to Belleville and slept near the Western nail mill the first night of his return. In the morning he came into the city with the object of delivering himself up to Deputy Sheriff Al Dawson, but changed his mind and started out again to the American bottoms where he had been raised, and after a stop of a few days in the bottoms, made his way to East Carondelet, and from there across the Missouri, where he was captured about three weeks after the murder by Sergeant O'Donnell of St. Louis. He was brought to Belleville and incarcerated in the county jail, was indicted by the grand jury at the May term, tried on October 7, and found guilty of the murder with sentence, hanging.

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